

Health has been a major topic of concern this year, with the pandemic of the H1N1 virus. Tracy Mayo has been the health agent for the town of Duxbury for the past four years. The Clipper visited her to get more information on how our Board of Health works and the impact of the flu season.

Q: What is the role of the health agent within the Board of Health?

The Board of Health meets every two weeks. They primarily discuss requests and variances for septic, pools, etc and any health issue that may come up. One role of the health agent is to follow up on the matters of the board. I set up inspections and process permits for septic, pools, restaurants, camps, tanning salons, etc.

A second role of the health agent is as town coordinator for the Medical Reserve Corp. The MRC covers the towns of Duxbury, Hanson, Marshfield, Pembroke and Whitman. It is a partnership of community volunteers, some men and women within health related fields, and some not. They are in charge of setting up disaster response emergency shelters when needed, promoting health education, and are present at community events such as the Duxbury Triathlon. The MRC helped to administer the H1N1 flu shots during our town clinics. The Health Agent is in charge of their training as well as coordinating their activities.

Q: How has the H1N1 pandemic affected your position this year?

My assistant, Janet Whittemore, and I have been extremely busy and the H1N1 has been our main focus since last spring when it was first realized. We have been working constantly with the state and with the schools. It was difficult, especially at first, since we were being allotted only a



Health agent, Tracy Mayo, is doing her best to keep Duxbury healthy.

small number of doses. So we weren't sure what the participation would be and how long we would need

Q: Do we have many reported cases of H1N1 in Duxbury?

Not really, but that is because doctors stopped testing specifically for the strain. With so many sick people, they assumed if you had certain symptoms you had the flu, and treated you accordingly, so the statistics are very inconclusive.

Q: How has the town responded to the clinics offered by the Town?

We have held four clinics between November and January. We administered 1345 doses of the vaccine. We are no longer going to schedule the clinics. The Partners Homecare offers vaccines on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30 p.m. Also, the vaccine is more readily available now at most pharmacies, some retail stores, and most doctors offices for free.

Q: Tell me a little about yourself.

I live here in Duxbury, but I grew up in Illinois. I attended Illinois State University where I received a bachelors degree in environmental health. I've been married about two years now to my husband, Ed. I love it here in Duxbury since we have the beach and are only a short drive to the mountains. In my spare time, I enjoy the beach, reading, traveling, and mostly spending time with my family and friends.

The Clipper Visits Tracy Mayo

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